(79th Amendment) Bill, in 1992 has been pending in the Rajya Sabha for the last 12 years for want of political consensus.

The issue of withdrawing the Bill is under consideration of the Government.

Food Adulteration

1962. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that food adulteration is being reported regularly in one or other parts of the country;

(b) whether the entry of MNCs in the food industry contributed to adulteration to gain competitive edge on price front; and

(c) the steps taken to identify/prevent adulteration?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (c) Cases of food adulteration have been detected in different parts of the country from time to time. The implementation of the PFA Act, 1954 and Rules framed thereunder are entrusted with the Food (Health) Authorities of the States/ UTs. The enforcement staff of the States/UTs. draw random samples of various food articles under the provisions of the said Act and Rules Action is taken against the offenders where the samples of food articles do not conform to the prescribed standards.

No such specific reports that entry of MNCs in food industry has contributed to food adulteration has come to the notice of Government. The Food (Health) Authorities of the States/UTs. are advised from time to time to keep a strict vigil on the quality of various food articles being sold in the markets and draw random samples from manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers etc. regularly.

Qualification for nursing course

1963. SHRI N.K. PREMA CHANDRAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Nursing Council of India insists that the applicants for nursing course should be unmarried or legally divorced women;